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ASIA/JORDAN - The Christian candidates in the elections do not go unnoticed

Amman (Agenzia Fides) - There are more than forty Christians who will present themselves as candidates in the parliamentary elections for the renewal of the Lower Chamber, scheduled for tomorrow in Jordan. This is confirmed to Fides Agency by Father Rifat Bader, director of the Catholic Centre for Studies and Media. According to Fr. Bader, in the Christian candidates profiles and themes they focused on during the campaign, they encounter the diverse traits and concerns that characterize the ecclesial communities present in the Hashemite Kingdom.
Most of them compete for nine seats (out of 150) that the quota system ensures Christian minorities (other minority groups that hold "reserved" seats are Circassians, Chechens and Bedouins). But there are also many Christians who present themselves as candidates within the territories or in connection with national lists. These include former MPs such as the Protestant Ghazi Musharbash - who in his speeches emphasized the need to protect the Christians from every creeping, political and social discrimination - or Wadih Zawaideh, who studied at the Seminary of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem.
The first Jordanian woman to be elected deputy had been the Christian Salma Rabadi. Among the candidates tomorrow there is also Boshra Haddad, until now director of a school of the Latin Patriarchate. The Palestinian Shoukri Odeh competes for the seat reserved to Christians for the area of Amman. While the lawyer Amir Kakish, in his speeches, also touched on the sensitive and controversial topic of change of religion. A special case is represented by Shibli Haddad, candidate for the seat reserved to Christians for the area of Madaba, who with his quirky findings has become a "case" in the Jordan election campaign. The sixty-year-old Haddad (who claims to have worked for thirty years in the public relations sector in Qatar and Arabia) makes extensive use of slogans, as the demand to exploit oil fields.
According to Fr. Rifat Bader, tomorrow's elections are an important test to decipher the future of Jordan in the chaotic Middle Eastern context. "The boycott of the elections by the Muslim Brotherhood," notes the director of the Catholic Centre for Studies and Media "is a serious limitation, because Parliament is to represent all the organizations in the country. In any case, these elections are a first step towards the emergence of a genuine democracy. The lists that will have the most votes will for the first time have a weight in the appointment of the Prime Minister and the future government. And in the next election they may present real parties, with well established programs. In this way, " concludes Fr Bader" Jordan will also finds its way to achieve the Arab Spring. A gradual way, not revolutionary, that changes things slowly." (GV) (Agenzia Fides 22/01/2013).

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